FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

"For a world united in prayer"

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880-1956)

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Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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EDITORIAL

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE — SOME WONDER AND COMMENT

The language we have to use to express ourselves about spiritual matters is an obstacle to them, it always seemed to me. This may be because I first grew familiar with the language, which is full of cliches and very glib, on the tongues of sanctimonious relatives whom I disliked and thought I could see through even as a child. Maybe I associate this language, as it was used by these sanctimonious people, with the ugly and comfortless churches and Sunday schools to which I was dragged regularly. Whatever the reason, it has taken me at least half a lifetime to be able to utter the word "spiritual" with any degree of poise; and the word "God" I still shy away from, though this could be merely an appropriate lack of presumption.

A human being needs just about half a lifetime to see the desirability of the spiritual in his life. Particularly in this country, we are subjected to such pressures that a lot of time has to pass before we can pause and look around and notice what's what. Until we do pause, we are likely to dismiss the spiritually-minded as "old ladies" or worse—as individuals out of the swim of all the activity that counts. If we like to believe we are "with it," we are not attracted by those who are "out of it" whether it is because they are wise or modest or shy or philosophical or serene. It's very easy to equate the spiritual with the boring and the defeated, the overweight and the gray-haired. And once we do this, there is little or no problem about sealing up our senses against spiritual things.

But more than time is necessary for the discovery of the

spiritual, obviously, or we would be living in a world where everybody over fifty is a saint. Upbringing—religious education of the young—apparently is effective only in the long run, coming into forceful operation along with the middle-aged crisis. Only a few of us have been so gifted by God that we possess from the start unshakable faith and confidence in Him that can not be spoiled by anything in life.

My own experience—and the experience of the people I know best—has been that spirituality has come into my life only as a result of my needing it, of my realizing the void that is there when it isn't, and of my learning the hard way when the spiritual has been ignored, evaded, betrayed, and lost. The hard way is the human way, unfortunately.

I bring in these personal details solely because they provide me with the vocabulary and some figures of speech to say what I mean. . . . What I mean is that, knowing the dingy colors of a day when the spirit is not operating, I have been able to discern—to begin to discern—the colors of a day when the spirit is. There are numberless details, including some physical ones of the most intimate nature that we ought to be taught at some time in our lives, that we should be able to find written down somewhere. It's amazing that we are so uneducated in these critical matters and that we have so blunted our natural-born abilities to recognize what a friend of mine calls "the gentle (or not so gentle) nudge, often felt through illness, which touches us in the area of one or more of the 'earthly' senses."

One thing is clear about the next step. It is not something we do ourselves. It is not reached by hard work or great conscientiousness or sincere intention or profound ambition or pressing need, though need must have something to do with it. All we can do—you, I suspect, as well as I—is prepare ourselves so that something can happen. This is particularly difficult for Americans. We are brought up in the belief that the best things in life are gained by our own efforts, the more furious the efforts the more glittering our rewards. The idea of getting ready to do nothing sounds spooky, wrong, foreign, practically unAmerican.

Other people have more confidence about this idea than I. For me it is like entering a body of water with the promise that I won't move a muscle. Such passivity requires of me a bravery and above all a faith that I am not certain I have. It's like allowing myself to be rendered unconscious by the anaesthetist's hypodermic needle: I don't like anything about it.

Here, by the way, is another instance of the inadequacy of

our language, at least as we use it. All my life I have heard talk of people "leading spiritual lives." The first thing that becomes clear to me, once I have investigated the possibility for myself, is that it is the spirit not I who is going to do all the leading.

For "something" does "happen." All this preparation and hullaballoo about getting oneself ready is not useless. But in order to give an accurate account of "what" happens we are going to have to struggle not only with language again but with the uneducated state of our senses which have not been trained since childhood to perceive such happenings or to know what to make of them once they have come into human consciousness. I am aware, for instance, that when the spirit is leading me I enjoy a remarkable sensation of well-being which I can recognize as easily as other states of bliss after, say, a good dinner or a happy day in the country. But the word "well-being" does not express the feel-thoroughly not only because it fails to distinguish itself from these other states but because it ought to contain some indication of the feeling of safety that is part of it as well as something more that would include the child-like trustingness that, for all my lack of confidence, is still another part of it for me. To try to be clearer, I can say that I feel as if the universe and I were identical, but but when I say this I run afoul of words once more, because it's a cliche to say this and on account of this you don't believe my words and dismiss them without a second thought. And if, still trying, I say I feel as though I were both the rider and the horse, I err in the opposite direction and you don't believe me because my words are too fancy and, besides, nobody knows anything about horses or riding them nowadays and the comparison is meaningless.

Maybe the best way of expressing myself, after all, is to make a flat statement. In my very recent experience, I have found that the spirit does exist and that it will lead my life once I have made the decision that I want it to and I am willing to wait for God to make it move through me.

—P. G.

Character is property—it is the noblest of possessions. —*Gandhi*

ON BECOMING BLIND *Marion J. Richardson*

Let me share
the mist and perfume
from the flowers
in the fields —
to feel God's gifts
without a stare —
visions through windows
of illusion and love.

BROTHERS *Marion J. Richardson*

Mountain and stream
side by side,
by day the sun
lights the earth —
at night the moon
is sentinel,
blending into harmony
the earth and outer space.
Resting on a shading rock,
thoughts churn and flower,
bringing the past and present
into future writings,
uniting the races
traveled this way —
facts true and mystic —
finding a brother
who rested many years before
on this shading rock.

TWO POEMS ON REPENTANCE *Thomas Perkins*

1. Repentance,
As a state of mind,
Can not exist,
Unless expressed.

2. Repentance
Exalts higher
Than
It humbles
And so
Is a paradox.

ON SALVATION

Kelly Janes

To be saved from sin is much the same as to be healed of disease.

Between a culprit and his or her heavenly judge, justification interposes a divinely human being who understands not only the criminal. This holy counselor can say to the community, "You are as much to blame as my friend here for his breach in your law, for your standard of what is right and what is wrong is too simple, it does not allow for my client's past and possible future." So not only are the guilty adjusted to society but society, the neighbors near and far who have tolerated the unjust law, is also adjusted.

Sin being thus partly communal, salvation must likewise be a community concern. The murderer must be taught some more lively way to overcome his adversary, and the shoplifter must learn how to beg for what she cannot afford to buy. Here we can

all go to school to the criminal lawyer, the novelist, and the playwright, for we have to love the criminal not merely mitigate the crime.

Psychiatrists are not the only kind of physicians who can appropriately advise lawyer and priest on such cases. Physiology is often the area in which antisocial action develops. And the dietitian as well as the internist can prescribe.

Also, it may be better for the impatient lover to sprout a boil than to force his affection on an unwilling woman. A duodenal ulcer may be preferable to a born-secretary's accepting work as an accountant. It may be easier to cure the psychically induced ailment than for the employee to change her occupation.

So much for the negative aspect of salvation.

More positively, what is it to be saved from sin or healed of disease? It is to feel joy in place of woe, to laugh instead of to weep.

That medieval word "humor" has narrowed its meaning to being witty oneself and the cause of wit in others. No longer is it considered offensive to laugh at what in his sermon your pastor meant to be funny. Soon we shall be clapping hands at homiletic jesting.

To be saved or healed is also to become a member of a community in which sinners are applauded for kissing saints, for realizing fellowship, for loving their neighbors. Out in hell, men and women work for no reward besides money; here in heaven we work at humble as well as haughty service because we love and cherish one another.

CANDLE OF HOPE *Jaye Giammarino*

Burn bright your candle of hope
When sorrow seeks you out;
Rekindle it daily with faith—
Let love remove all doubt.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. —Isaiah 26:3

THE NIGHT VISITORS

Eleanor Ebersole

Once there was a village called They-town. Life was fairly happy in the village . People got along. They had food, and nice homes. Sometimes they were pretty scrappy. Televisions did get stolen. Some people took pills. Some drivers went through stop signs. A person or two got shot every year.

Some people became angry. A few didn't speak to another few. Sometimes families didn't get along and children got lost.

All in all, though, the people of They-town seemed to get along, they thought, as well as most. The one thing that distinguished They-town was the lights that often burned in the houses all night. Sometimes in one house. Sometimes in another. In some houses every night someone was up walking around, or watching the late show.

They-town seemed to have an illness, or a problem, that kept people awake. At the market or in the businesses people exchanged bits of news about how to get to sleep. Drink milk. Take a walk. Take a pill.

One person joining a conversation mentioned Me-town, which had appeared to him to be dark all night; except, of course, for the usual street lights for travelers who couldn't sleep or were in a hurry. And the town clock was also brightly lit.

"Well," one person suggested, "Why don't some of us go and check on this tonight."

Almost all present agreed to go. They met at dark and drove together to Me-town.

True enough! Me-town was so dark that the visitors were indeed grateful for the lights along the streets and for the bright town clock.

One o'clock. Two o'clock. The clock chimed cheerfully. It even chimed without anyone leaning out a window and shouting a protest that the noise had wakened him.

Bong. Bong.

"Hum" was about all the comment the night visitors could make. "Hum."

The difference between They-town and Me-town no one was able to comprehend.

The next day, one by one, the visitors returned to Me-town to ask some questions. "Where were your lights last night?" "Doesn't that bell keep you awake?"

Of course no one in Me-town understood what was happening. They had always slept at night. The bell was friendly, they thought, and the street lights were required by law.

By noon the visitors began to find each other as they stopped for lunch in a lunchroom across from the town clock.

One last question! There had to be an answer.

A schoolboy passed their table on his way to the counter.

"Son," one of the visitors inquired, "do you sleep at night?"

Needless to say, the boy was startled by the question.

"Sleep? Sure. I say, 'Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray you, Lord, my soul to keep.' Then I go to sleep."

Everyone does. I think. We all go to sleep.

AT SEASON'S END

Virginia Lytle Waller

Not always revealed
Until season's end,
Fragrance of flowers
Kindness of friends.

ESSAY ON LIFE

Pearl S. Buck

Life is a continuing process. This much I am sure of and this much I state on a fine sunny morning as I reflect upon the fact that I have begun to live the eightieth year of my life. It is an enjoyable year. I am in good health. I have much work to do, and I enjoy myself and what I do. I sit in a comfortable room, my work table faces a window which gives me a charming view of a country road winding up a hill. It is the main street of a small village —Danby, in the state of Vermont.

We have been coming to Vermont, my family and I, for some twenty years, to spend summers, to celebrate Christmas, to enjoy skiing. Now the children have married and gone their way, their father has preceded me into the next stage of life, wherever it is, and so I am alone and yet never alone. Around me is the village life; here in my house is the life I find in books, in music, and above all in work.

I do not know what people mean when they speak of being old. I do not know, because I do not know where life begins, if indeed there is a beginning, and I do not know where it ends, if indeed there is an end. I know that I am in a stage, a phase, a period of life. I entered this stage at birth. I shall end this stage at death.

For me, death is merely the entrance into further existence. I do not know what that existence will be, but then I did not know what existence in this stage would be when I was born into it. I did not ask to be, but I have been and I am. My reason tells me I shall continue to be. I am on my way somewhere, just as I was on the day of my birth.

"Young" and "old" are for me meaningless words except as they denote where we are in the process of this stage of being.

Would I wish to be "young" again? No, for I have learned too much to wish to lose it. It would be like failing to pass a grade in school. I have reached an honorable position in life, because I am old and no longer young. I am a far more valuable person today than I was fifty years ago, or forty years ago, or thirty, twenty, or even ten. I have learned so much since I was

seventy! I believe I can honestly say that I have learned more in the last ten years than I learned in any previous decade. This, I suppose, is because I have perfected my techniques, so that I no longer waste time in learning how to do what I have to do, which is what I also want to do.

So much time has to be spent just in learning the techniques of how to live and live happily. A newborn child has to learn how to breathe, to cry, to eat, to sit up, to reach for, to walk, to talk—all the techniques of beginning this span of life. Year by year, we work for techniques in order to master ourselves and reach a growing understanding of ourselves and others.

Happiness is based upon this primary understanding. We must understand ourselves before we can respect ourselves. We must respect ourselves before we can win the respect of others. We need self-respect and the respect of others to achieve happiness in this stage. I will go further. I will say that I believe this to be an eternal truth. I believe that the better we achieve such happiness in this life, the further along we will be later.

It has been a wonderful experience to learn to know myself —my capacities, my weaknesses, my likes and dislikes, the strengths and weaknesses of my body in which I am housed. The better I know myself, I find, the better I learn to know others who may be, and indeed always are, more or less unlike me and unlike each other. It has been an absorbing study, a lifetime process which of course goes on endlessly.

At first, it was hard and in some ways it still is, for we are, each and all, eternally changing and in every way. Physically I am well, but I cannot work the endless hours I once did. I have learned and am learning just how many hours I can work at my best and then I must be willing to stop until conditions are right again. Body and mind are partners so long as we stay together in this phase of existence. Body must not be allowed to become master, however. Mind must control in spite of what it may have to concede in order to persuade body to function as well as it can. And mind must not allow itself to become idle.

The third force is the will, and between body and mind, *will* must come in to action. Body has a devious way of trying to persuade mind not to work today. Then will must recall the pleasures

of mind, the pleasure of work achieved, the pleasure of new knowledge, the pleasure of discovery of great minds in books. All this is food for the mind, and such food gives strength to the mind, exactly as bread and meat, fruit and vegetables, give food to the body. Mind, continually fed, responds in vigorous thought, in enjoyment of life, in creative action.

Here, I return again to the matter of respect—self-respect and the respect of others, which we may call the respect of society. It is a matter of puzzlement to me that in the United States, my own country, we have so little respect for old people—that is, for people who have advanced further in the experience of life here than have children, teenagers, and the middle-aged.

I take it that this is so because we, as a nation, have had so short a life. We are still a child nation. We are still absorbed in learning the child techniques of national life—how to eat, how to walk and run and play. The larger achievements have yet to be made.

We will, of course, learn them as older nations have done, in due course. Meanwhile, we make incredible demands upon the young. We expect young people, too young to understand themselves, much less others, to administer our government, our business affairs, our total national life. Of course they cannot do it. And we older people, who could help them, confound them by having no respect for ourselves and thereby enhancing their lack of respect for us.

I am amazed indeed, but then I have had the great advantage of being reared in the very old country of China, where the highest respect was given to the old, and where even the emperor in the traditional government was controlled by a board of censors composed of the wisest elders of the nation. In the lowliest homes as well as in the palaces, families and people treasured their aged men and women. The young deferred to their elders and the elders felt it their duty to teach the young.

Above all, there was no fear of death. The young properly fear death, for when a young person dies, it is unnatural. He enters unprepared into the future. He has not had time to learn how to live here and so he is not ready to leave. But when this span of years we call life on Earth has been lived with self-respect,

there need be no fear to proceed into what awaits. I never saw an old person in China who was afraid to die. The attitude toward death was a peaceful acceptance, a readiness to proceed.

Here in my own country, we have allowed ourselves to be pervaded by the short history of our nation. Instead, we should think of the human race as a whole, of which we are members. We should not allow young people to be impatient with us, bully us, relegate us. That they are able to do so is because we have not taught them better. And we have not taught them better because we have not known our own worth. We have not respected ourselves, either as individuals or as a group in our national life and society.

Instead, we have even sometimes copied the weaknesses and follies of the young. Old men and women, but especially women, have aped the manners, the dress, the speech of the younger generation, and when we do so, we are unworthy indeed of their respect. Especially in our news media and advertising, the emphasis on the young denigrates the older generation. It leads the old to despise themselves.

Age deserves respect, but respect can be won only by the dignity of self-respect. "Dignity" is a beautiful word, a noble word, befitting those who have learned the meaning of life through the experience of the years. But when experience has taught us too little, so that we behave without the dignity of our years, then we cannot fulfill our duty to our own country and our own people or to our world.

Let us take thought, let us reflect, we who have spent our years. Let us see what can be done in the remaining years!

This is my essay on life, expressed in brief. There will be those who question my certainty of a continuing existence.

My belief is based upon sound scientific reasons and long acquaintance with some of the greatest scientists and philosophers of our times. Religious faith and scientific hypotheses are much nearer to the same conclusions than is commonly realized. Serious studies in parapsychology are being conducted in various countries and the results are remarkable and will some day be made

known. For the present, I content myself with two true anecdotes which express in simple terms the silence between this life and the next.

The first occurred in my own family, soon after the death of my husband, who was much loved by his grandchildren, Susan, then aged five, and Ricky, aged three. The occasion was a family picnic, and I overheard the following conversation:

Ricky: "Why doesn't Grandfather come to the picnic?"

Susan: "He can't come because he's up in heaven."

Ricky "Why doesn't he come down?"

Susan: "*He can't find the ladder.*"

It is truly spoken, out of the mouth of a babe. He does not come down because "he can't find the ladder." The techniques of communication are not yet complete.

The second anecdote was given me through a letter by an unknown woman. In effect, it was as follows:

"When my small children could not understand the silence between their recently dead father and us, who loved him so dearly, I explained by describing to them the life-cycle of the dragonfly. It begins as a grub in the water. Then at the proper moment it surfaces, finds it has wings, and flies away.

"'I suppose,' I told them, 'that the ones left in the water wonder where he went and why he doesn't come back. But he can't because he has wings. Nor can they go to him, because they don't have their wings yet.'".

Something like that is true, I believe. We haven't our wings yet either. But some day?

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That which is past and gone is irrevocable; wise men have enough to do with things present and to come. --- Sir Francis Bacon

"A time of awakening comes for each of us — a moment when we are in perfect tune with the universe."

FROM A WINTER DIARY

Emma S. McLaughlin

The golden days of summer are only a remembered warmth unsuccessfully trying to reach me through the pewter overcast of a February sky. The leaves that burned so vividly in autumn's sprightly wind have long since dried, leaping each other to mound in disarray along the fences and around the evergreens. Songs of birds have been replaced by winter silence and by what I have always called the silence within the silence.

Now there is a twilight snowfall that muffles sound as it drops its mantle about us, flake by sparkling flake. There is the crunch of snow beneath our feet, the plop of snow as it falls from weighted branches, the tinkle of twigs encased in ice. I look through saints' flowers frosted on my window, a delicate tracery of leaves and ferns. At first glance, everything seems lifeless. I know better.

On such a day as this, I was privileged to walk in the woods while spending the weekend with a group of senior-high young people on retreat. Early Sunday morning I pulled on slacks, sweater and parka, struggled into boots, and started out for a solitary walk. Much of the earth was still asleep. There had been a light snow during the night and for a time I amused myself by trying to decipher the scrawled signatures of animals and birds. Tiring of this, I stood with my back against a pine and waited

for sunrise.

There was an absence of all sound, or so I thought until I became aware of a symphony of quiet background music. Under the snow, around the roots of trees, I heard faint gurglings. I knew that though the world seemed winter-locked thawing streams were moving under their icy coats. In places swept clear by the wind, moss was a lush green. Above my head, fingers of the wind plucked the strings of tree-harps. From far away I heard the woodpecker's tom-tom beating a steady rhythm.

As the sun moved above a ridge of mountains, it brought an awakening of life. Birds darted from tree to tree. No matter how bleak the moment, how dark the night, there comes an awakening. No matter how long the winter, how deep the snow, life waits expectantly and knows the signs of quickening.

A time of awakening comes for each of us. Most of us have, at one time or another, experienced it—a moment when we are in perfect tune with the universe, when our reason for being takes on a new clarity and a greater depth of meaning. It can come at any time, in any season.

My time of awakening came not in the spring of the year but on a bright day in October. There had been a lovely drive through the landscape and a morning's visit with a friend. We sat in front of the fire and shared tea and conversation. We spoke of good books, world problems, mutual friendships. I left the house relaxed and happy and started the drive home. Suddenly I realized I had been driving along with a broad smile on my face. I wondered what passing motorists must have thought of me. And then I stopped caring. The leaves were three times as vivid as they had been—the very atmosphere was colored, the sky the deepest blue and the clouds the purest white. I was impatient to get home, eager to write it down and capture the essence. It would not be in prose, but in free verse, for only poetry would be worthy of such a moment. The poem follows.

THE AWAKENING

Looking back to the time before,
I believe I must have been dead---

like the winter creek, sealed in a casket of ice,
like the caterpillar, curled in his silken blanket,
like the last note from the great bell
in the high steeple of the church,
the final, quavering note
that clanged and climbed its way
up through the cold air and was lost
in the muffled insulant of snow.

Surely I had been dead, for this was beginning,
the light of a new day.
It swept out of the east in waves of flame.
Never before had the sun been a pinwheel
of fire, burning its way into consciousness,
calling me out of myself, to leave my shell
behind in the tunnel of night
along with the weight of its shadow.
This was a moment of revelation, of new birth,
when the veil of the past was torn from my eyes,
leaving me blinded, yet seeing.

I moved into a world of color,
vibrant, leaping, singing color.
Color that cut a path through my body
to paint its vivid pictures on my mind.
color that was at once an ecstasy,
a stabbing pain, an overwhelming sadness.
Color that was a will-o'-the-wisp, a haunting melody,
a dream — always beyond the scope of my ability
to portray it. But everywhere there was color,
and with it awareness — an awareness of all things.

Always there had been books.
Only now, there were more books, new books.
They came to me as friends, holding out
treasure beyond my imagining. They grasped
at me and led me over untried paths,
up new mountains, and along deep, quiet

pools of reflection. Sometimes they told jokes,
like old friends — and the glade echoed to my
laughter. Then there were other times they
squeezed my heart and I stumbled ahead
through a swirling mist.

This was a time of haste, of almost frantic urgency
to catch everything and hold it fast;
to pin the sun upon the streaked palette
of the sky before it slipped to the black sea-
bottom of the night; to write the music of
leaves, before the wind that played it blew
off across the barrier of hills; to freeze
the song of birds so I might always know
the clear, dark-shattering magic; to put the
whole of the world upon a piece of paper — and
to do it before the ink of
my pen ran dry.

IMPROMPTU ON ADOLESENCE

Eleanor Sue Harrison

Between once of a time
and the coming of then
there swung in the void a child:
scratching psalms on paper scraps;
wearing ephemeral dreams in his eyes—
chasing will-o-the-wisps
with his eager-questing heart.

FIVE POEMS by Leonard Opalov

Promising Hour

The air is fresh
in the morning
like a dewy flower,
the hour young
and promising;
the windows wide open.
My ears attuned
to the calm hush.
Soon the day
will unfold its wings
and flutter like a thrush.

Description of Sunday

Sunday reminds me
of a birch
nearby a church.
The birch
garbed in white
celebrates mass;
the birds in festive mood
twitter: God's world is good.

Winter Landscape

Winter returns me
to my childhood,
when fairy-tales
embraced me
with motherly arms,
when snowflakes
were sweet,
and the frost
painted my cheeks
apple-red,
when I admired
the blizzard's diamonds,
and the wind whistled
like a wayward boy,
when sleds glided
like birds
down snowy hillocks,
and a heavenly artist
painted upon window-panes
silvery arabesques,
and the whole world
was alabaster-white.

Anticipation

Outdoors
the frost marches
with wide stride,
and congeals everything
on its way.

On an embroidered towel
in my white kitchen
a red rooster
incessantly crows —
a harbinger of Spring.

Such A Mosaic World

In everything I see color,
In everything and all.
It compensates for dolor,
That makes a big world small.

O, green can speak of magic,
And pink is feminine.
Black alone is tragic.
I am lilac's paladin.

O, white is alabaster.
Azure depicts the sky.
An ennobling dream — an aster.
Youth — lapis lazuli.

"A change of ambition—away from profit and power, away from man's instinctive respect for matter and its possession—would in itself solve many of earth's present troubles. . . ."

CHANGING HUMAN NATURE

Irving F. Laucks

Human nature must be changed from competitive to cooperative, otherwise man's decent existence on the earth cannot survive. War with nuclear bombs, airplanes, and various deadly poisons, is intolerable. Domestic guerilla warfare such as now exists in the U.S. cannot long be endured. Nor can the pollution of nature by competitive industry. All these are results of man's competitive instincts.

The early needs of primitive man for scarce food led first to deadly competition with other species of animals; after he had mastered them, he kept on competing with his own kind—for better land, for wives. One way to change this competition today might be to make food plentiful—"dirt cheap." But even so, man's leaders would continue to compete for power. The competitive, aggressive instinct ingrained in human nature must be changed if man is to continue on earth.

Up until a century ago man believed he was a unique creation of some higher power that took great interest in him, and that the individual would be later rewarded or punished for his conduct during the temporary existence he was required to pass on this earth. Such beliefs became the basis of western religions for nearly 4,000 years, but lately have been pretty well dispelled by astronomy's dawning realization of the enormity of the universe, by the doctrine of evolution, and by the materialistic concentration of modern science. Yet none of these has answered the prime question of man's curiosity: how did it all start?

It eventually became evident to biologists that the promised resurrection of the body was impossible. Whatever reward or punishment was in prospect after death would have to be inflicted on the mentality or soul. But materialistic science had decided that mind was only a by-product of the reaction of certain kinds of matter of which the brain and nerves were composed. Not much hope there of anything surviving. All such reactions would cease with the destruction of the brain.

A few scientists were not satisfied that matter was composed of unchangeable atoms like infinitesimal grains of sand, as was the classic theory. Another ingredient of the universe had been discovered—energy. It was defined as the ability to do work, but what it really was no one knew, nor does anyone today. But many ways have been found to adapt certain varieties of it to serve human needs, and scientists have acquired much prestige by demonstrating such adaptations.

Then all of a sudden at Hiroshima the public had a terrible demonstration—the solid matter they had handled and stood on for ages was merely another form of energy—far more powerful in explosion than anything previously discovered. Since then, this terrific matter-energy has been put to decent use for power production: perhaps your dinner was cooked by it. The significance of the fact that the matter of which the earth is composed is a form of energy has not yet dawned on man; energy is a step nearer reality.

Meanwhile, other scientists had decided that the mind or thought was the expression of still another variety of energy---psychic energy. They had found much experimental evidence in its relation to other forms of energy--and, of course, this psychic energy fully conformed in its ability to work to the definition of other varieties. In fact, the work of thought was the first necessity of almost any creative task.

The concept of psychic energy was necessary to account for man's spirit, soul, mind, intellect, etc., which very evidently had nothing in common with matter. But materialistic science still objected to the idea that energy could form a structure that would have the permanence that religion had attributed to the soul of man. There was little endurance to a flash of lightning or the

current of electric energy that drives motors. So to say that a "soul," a structure of energy, was able to survive death seemed ridiculous to science. As a consequence, western religions have lost much influence in the last century. Partly this has been due to their inattention to any experimental evidence concerning psychic phenomena and energy. Modern people are not so satisfied as ancients were to take some authority's unsupported word for nature and its activities.

When the Hiroshima bomb exploded, it promised the end to materialism as a philosophy of reality. Not only was a solid rock thereby shown to be in reality something as "ethereal" as energy, but this construct of energy had great permanence; it had existed in the earth for perhaps a billion years before the miner dug it out and a scientist exploded it. If one kind of energy was the real constituent of a rock of such age and endurance, why couldn't another kind of energy—psychic—be called upon to construct an enduring structure such as mind or soul? Psychic research and parapsychology for a hundred years have been finding good experimental evidence that confirms this concept, and there is evidence also that primitive man for a hundred thousand years believed this.

But what has all this about the reality of energy rather than matter to do with the present troubles of earth's peoples and with replacing competition with cooperation?

First, we could have a hope that energy may literally become "dirt cheap," since the dirt under our feet is composed of it. What then would be the use of competing for it—especially when the actualization of such cheapness would have been accomplished by the cooperation of a multitude of international scientists. Food and all other human needs would become plentiful.

But it goes deeper than this. Demonstration of the ability of of energy to form long-lasting structures would, in turn, stimulate psychic research to much greater efforts.

In the past it has been much ignored and very poorly supported. A small percent of the effort that has been expended on nuclear energy, or even on electric energy, would make a tremen-

dous difference in the understanding of psychic energy, especially in the finding of evidence for the survival of mind after death.

Incontrovertible evidence of such survival would give a new turn to the ambition of man's leaders. It has always been their complaint that they are unable to take their accomplishments "with them" when they die. But this would not be true of mental achievements. Only is it true because they have concentrated their efforts on materiality; ignoring development of the psychic structure except such as could be applied to matter.

Curiosity is a strong trait of man's mentality which has so much still to learn. He knows today as little about the reality of the universe as an amoeba knows about today's culture. A soul-directed leader has a wonderfully interesting future opportunity once he realizes that this earthly existence, temporarily tied to a body composed of matter, is merely a preliminary to the real existence.

It must have been early man's innate curiosity that led him to wonder about the origin of everything, and thus engendered religion's ideas of creation and a Creator. Religion, however, has had another more important function. Cooperation was essential to the first anthropoids—for the individual could not have physically survived the appetite of the sabretooth tiger. The teachings of religion about man's behavior were essential for the degree of cooperation that permitted any society to be formed.

Ideas of energy and evolution relieve religion of explaining how everything originated. As to the other function of religion, the world's religions have so far done only a poor local job of promoting cooperation by teaching man to love his fellows. Cooperation has been confined to relatively small groups. Religion did not foresee the shrinking of the earth by modern technology.

One basis of all cooperative societies has been organization and leadership. There is no reason why this should not be true of a Universe Society of energetic structures, which evolution requires to have been of infinite age, organization, and wisdom long before earthmen were evolved and began to enter it. A religion recognizing such a leadership (or deity) would conform

to the evidence that science has discovered as well as to the principles of several oriental religions, and might well serve as a basis of badly needed ecumenical religion. Such an organization of Universe Society of individual minds would also agree with man's experience in societies and their needs.

Such a religion would rapidly change man's attitude toward the real meaning of the future existence of his inner structure. It would hold out hope to youth of an interesting future, largely engaged in satisfying the curiosity which is such a prominent feature of youth's mentality.

A change of ambition—away from profit and power, away from man's instinctive respect for matter and its possession—would in itself solve many of earth's present troubles. Instead of untold billions or trillions for competition we would spend a few of these for the construction of a practical earthly preliminary to the real existence in the Universe Society, in which each individual has a chance to share and enjoy—a preliminary in which cooperation will replace competition as the urge of human effort —a real change in human nature. *(from THE COOPERATOR)*

PRAYER for a World Day of Prayer service

Loreta Inman

Our Father in heaven, who has given to men the great yearning for goodness, may thy message of love and peace and good will find a welcome in the hearts and minds of men everywhere that peace may reign throughout the earth and brotherhood prevail among men of every race and clan and class and creed.

POEM *Ruddy Ecker*

Guard my heart forever Lord
Give instruction through thy word
Make me know just how to live
And thy word to others give.

Make my thoughts both pure and right
If I am to be thy light
That thy will be done in me
And all glory be to thee.

LOVE'S GREAT POWER *Emma S. McLaughlin*

The woolly lamb stood by His bed,
The donkey's soft lips brushed His head —
"This newborn child is very small;
He surely cannot love us all."

The gray dove listened, blinked an eye,
Smoothed down a feather, cooed a sigh;
How could such simple creatures know
Love's everlasting power to grow?

THE JEWISH CALENDAR

Samuel M. Silver

In order to understand the Jewish religious calendar, we have to refresh our memories with regard to the definitions of a day, a month, and a year.

A day is the time that it takes the earth to revolve on its axis, twenty-four hours.

A month, as the name implies, is the time it takes the moon to circle the earth, which is twenty-nine days, twelve hours, forty-four minutes, and three seconds.

A year is the time it takes the earth to go about the sun, which is three hundred and sixty-five days, five hours, forty-eight minutes, and forty-six seconds.

It is obvious that the days do not divide equally into the months or years. Hence, if we have a solar calendar, we must make some adjustments. These adjustments are effectuated by additions of days to the years at various intervals. Our adjustments are leap days every fourth year, except for some of the even years marking the beginning of centuries.

The computation of the annual cycles of the moon and the sun goes back to the days of the Egyptians. Our solar calendar came to us from them through the Romans, who made two refinements in it during the reigns of Julius Caesar and Augustus. Finally Pope Gregory introduced other improvements. Hence our calendar is called the Gregorian Calendar. It modified the Julian Calendar, which, in turn, had introduced changes in the so-called Ptolemian Calendar.

The purpose of a calendar is to mark off certain intervals and to keep a systematic record of recurrent events, enabling us to have a trustworthy means of reckoning dates in advance, as well as fixing certain civil or religious occasions.

For the ancient Hebrews, the later Israelites and the modern Jews, a fixed calendar was essential. For one thing, it was vital to celebrate the Sabbath on time. The Sabbath represented a halt in the mad rush of economic materialism; hence it must

be correctly celebrated. It was not enough just to count the days and rest at the end of the week. It was important to know exactly when the Sabbath began. So, early in Jewish history, the calculations were made as precise as possible.

To the Jew the day begins at sunset. This notion had a historic and a theological basis. In the opening words of the Bible, the Creation story includes the litany, at the end of the work done by the Creator on each day, "it was evening, and it was morning." Evening is mentioned first. Hence the day was regarded as beginning at sunset. Philosophically this was interpreted as meaning that when things look black or bleak we must not think the end has come. No, the darkness is the prelude to the dawn. If man is creative, as the Lord was, the darkness will precede the morning.

But the Sabbath began with the appearance of the moon. It was therefore important to know when the moon was first visible. This led to the study and scrutiny of the heavens.

This examination of the moon was even more important in ancient days because among the Jews there grew up the practice of making the arrival of the new moon into a holiday. So appreciative were the Israelites of the recurrent miracle of the advent of the moon, so awesome did this gift of God seem to them, that they celebrated the arrival of the new moon whenever it occurred. The arrival was accompanied by the recitation of a prayer of thanksgiving. The rhythm of nature, as exemplified in the predictable return of the moon, gave rise to added faith in the reliability of God.

Supremely significant to the Jew was the appearance of the new moon in the seventh month of the year. Perhaps seven has always been associated with good luck. The seventh month in the Jewish calendar coincided with the conclusion of summer and also with the autumnal equinox. The year was commencing all over again, after its summer splurge. The seasons were beginning their annual pirouette. It was a good time to marvel afresh at the constancy of God's management of the universe. Gradually that new moon of the seventh month, the month which brought autumn to the world, became a day of solemnity par excellence

to the Jew. He fashioned a legend to the effect that the world had been created at that time. He told his children that the recurrence of that day was a sign that man, made in the image of God, could also find new sources of creativity each year.

That special new moon of the seventh month (called Tishri) came to be known as the Head of the Year. The Hebrew Rosh Hashanah is often called the New Year. It became a day of reflection, of review, of repentance, and gradually in Jewish history it became the first day of a skein of ten days given over to self-examination and penance. The climax of the period of penitence was designated Yom Kippur, the tenth day of the Month of Tishri, the Day of Atonement, a twenty-four hour span devoted to prayer, forgiveness, and fasting.

It became extremely vital to pinpoint the arrival of the New Year, for the calendation of the rest of the year rested upon the exactitude of determining the beginning. In ancient Palestine individuals who spotted the moon would report their findings to the priestly authorities. The latter would send up flares or beacons, and a series of relayed flares on high places and mountain tops would convey the data to the rest of the country.

Later, when the Jews wandered beyond Palestine, messengers would carry the tidings. Gradually, in lands outside of Palestine, it became customary to celebrate the holy day on two days just in case there was a mistake.

To this day, traditionalist Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah for two days as a record of the difficulties of being sure, in those early times, that the moon had really been spotted. Reform Jews have reverted to the one-day observance.

But, of course, the fast day of Yom Kippur is observed but one day by all, for it was contrary to the humanitarianism of Judaism to countenance the prolongation of a foodless period.

Indeed, this humanitarianism prompted further astronomical research on the part of the Israelites. Because the Sabbath was a day of rest when one was supposed to abstain from all labor, in-

cluding cooking, it was decided that Yom Kippur must never occur on Friday or a Sunday, for if you fasted on Friday, you would be unable to cook a meal on Saturday, and if you observed the Sabbath by refraining from cooking and then had to approach a fast day on Sunday, you would be famished two days running.

Additional motivation for Jewish interest in astronomy and precise computation of the days of the calendar is to be found in the nature of other Jewish holidays.

Aside from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, known now as the High Holydays, the major Jewish observances are three. These holidays originated in the agricultural activities of the ancient Jewish farmers. One of these days is Passover, which roughly coincides with the advent of Spring and which was associated with the Spring harvest. Another is Tabernacles, known in Hebrew as Su-kose (Sukkoth), which is the time for thanksgiving for the autumn harvest. The third festival is known as Pentecost, or Sha-voo-ote (Shavuot) in Hebrew, and it celebrates the appearance of the first fruits after the spring planting. It is called Pentecost because it occurs fifty days after Passover. Shavuot is Hebrew for "weeks."

Obviously, these holidays had to be celebrated at the same time each year. They were identified with specific intervals in the life of the farmer. They couldn't slide through the year.

The holidays would have done a lot of sliding if the Israelites had clung to their lunar calendar. Often the Hebrew calendar is described as lunar. It was based on the moon, true, but early in Jewish history it was adjusted to the cycle of the sun.

To see what happens if an unadjusted lunar rhythm is permitted to hold sway, we merely have to gaze at the Mohammedan calendar. It is purely lunar and, from the point of view of periodicity, almost looney. For various holidays occur during different seasons as the years go by. If we were on a lunar calendar, Christ-

mas would veer toward the summer and Easter gradually find its way into winter.

The reason for this has already been stated. The solar year is three hundred and sixty-five days plus; the lunar cycle is approximately fifteen days shorter. The Hebrew calendar is not lunar; a long time ago it became what is known as luni-solar, or a bound, lunar calendar. Adjustments were made to correlate the two divergent cycles.

The process of reconciliation is quite complicated. A nineteen-year cycle was the basis of operations. During that period of nineteen years, days were added to months and, at certain intervals, an entire month was added.

In our solar calendar when we say we have a leap year, we know that one day, February 29, has been tacked onto the year. But in the Jewish calendar a leap year is one in which an entire month is added. This month is interpolated seven times during the nineteen-year spread. It happens in these years—the third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth.

The inserted month is of thirty days. It has the same name as the month it follows, except that it is called the Second. The intercalation, as it is called, is of the month which comes just before the month which contains the festival of Passover. This was done, of course, to make sure that the spring holiday came out in the Spring. The added month is known as Adar Two, or Adar the Second.

Because of certain requirements in the calendar we can see that the length of the Jewish religious year can vary. The New Year must not begin on a Friday or a Sunday, as has been indicated. It may not begin on a Wednesday because there is also a prohibition against permitting the seventh day of the Festival of Tabernacles to fall on a Saturday.

So we can see the complications. If the new moon of the seventh month is scheduled to take place on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday, then Rosh-Hashanah is permitted to occur at that time. Such a year, if it is not a leap year, will contain three hundred and fifty-three days and will be a lunar year.

If the new moon of the seventh month is slated to take place on a Wednesday, Friday, or a Sunday, the celebration of

the New Year is postponed by one day, and that year, if not a leap year, will last a day longer, that is three hundred and fifty-four days.

There is one other provision which can lengthen the Jewish year. If the lunar conjunction which marks the beginning of the new year is scheduled to occur after the noon hour, the beginning of the year is put ahead one day. Now, if that move should cause the year to begin on one of the forbidden days, the year is actually moved two days. Some years are therefore three hundred and fifty-five days in length.

These differences are accomodated by varying the length of some of the months of the year. There are twelve months in the non-leap year. In years with three hundred and fifty-four days, some of these months are given twenty-nine days; if the year must be a bit longer, they are given thirty days. The months which thus fluctuate are always the eighth and ninth months.

Now, we can readily see that when the leap month is added to balance the lunar and solar cycles, the year can be either three hundred and eighty-three days long or three hundred and eighty-four or three hundred and eighty-five.

The basis for the nineteen-year lunar cycle is research done by an Athenian scholar named Meton in 432 B.C.E. It was Meton who modified the Athenian calendar, and the Jewish authorities adopted his method of calculation. For this reason the cycle is often called the Metonic cycle. Incidentally the longer years of the cycle are called "embolismic," or "swollen."

In the earliest days the Israelite authorities would annually announce the advent of the new year. Later, the calculations were fixed, but they were kept secret and the officials would make the announcement in advance. When the Jewish people were dispersed in 70 C.E., the leadership was transferred to certain scholarly individuals who flourished in Babylon, which is now Iraq. These patriarchs, or sages, were granted the power by vir-

tue of their learning to regulate the religious lives of their people. In 359 C.E., one of these leaders, whose name was Hillel II, published the complex and intricate system whereby the calendar was computed, so that Jewish communities everywhere could do their own reckoning. This procedure still prevails today.

Actually, however, the Hillel calendar is a bit askew. The year really endures a few minutes longer than was believed in those times. For this reason, the lunar segment of the Jewish calendar is gradually moving ahead within the solar segment. The pace of this advance is about four days in a thousand years. This means that Jews now celebrate Passover, the spring holiday, four days later than was the case a thousand years ago. The march of Passover into the month of May will eventually cause an unbalance if it is not checked. Now that the State of Israel has come into being there is a considerable agitation among some rabbis for the convocation of a rabbinical council, or a Jewish ecumenical body like the one which met in Rome, to authorize the necessary changes to check the inaccuracies in the Jewish calendar.

As is known, the number of the Jewish year harks back to the theoretical time of Creation as it has been figured out from Biblical accounts. That is not to say that Jews really think the world began in 3760 B.C.E., but it became a ready way of numbering the years and has been adopted. The Jewish New Year which began in September, 1971, is thus number 5732.

According to the hypothetical scheme, Creation took place in the year 1, Noah flourished in the year 1057, Abraham was born in 1949, the Exodus took place in 2449, and Christianity was born around the year 3758. Of course, we know that because of shifts in the calendar from the Julian to the Gregorian set-up, our historians have been compelled to record the paradoxical circumstance that Jesus was born in the year 4 B.C.E.

A Christian involvement in the luni-solar annual cycle takes place every year in the matter of the holiday of Easter. No one

has to ask, "When does Christmas fall this year?" but everyone has to ask, "When is Easter?" The reason for the question is that Easter continues to be a date hitched to the lunar calendar. Traditionally, Easter was linked to Passover, for shortly after the Last Supper, which was the celebration of Passover, Jesus is said to have died.

In the Fourth Century the Christian Council of Nicea made some changes in the dating of Easter. The burden of its efforts was to separate Easter from Passover, even as church councils decreed that the Christian Sabbath should be Sunday instead of Saturday. The two holidays still come close to one another, but they do not coincide with regard to the first day of Passover. The Nicean ukase forbids it, although very often Easter Sunday does fall within the week of Passover. The church council ruled that Easter must take place on a Sunday after the spring equinox. Actually, we see here a recognition of the fact that Easter, like Passover, is related to the spring holiday. Similarly, Christmas and the Jewish winter holiday of Chanukah, although their purposes differ, also seem to stem back to a common source, a prehistoric mid-winter festival. As the days grew shorter and shorter, primitive man feared that perhaps there would be no more light. Hence, he sent up beacons signalling to the gods that he would like to avoid being blacked out. This practice, associated with the winter equinox, gave rise in all early cultures to a festival of lights. It is that aspect of light that both Christmas and Chanukah have in common, although, as we have pointed out, the associations which were added to these holidays differed sharply from both their early sources and from one another.

An interesting question remains. It is this. We have explained that the Jewish new year begins with the month of Tishri. But that month, it has been said, is the seventh month. Why should the year begin with the seventh month?

The answer is that there are indications that originally the year began with the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, the month

which contains Passover. It is logical to regard the year as beginning in the spring. It is, in fact, much more logical than its beginning on January 1. So historians are quite certain that the Jewish year once began in the spring. Indeed, we are sure that this was the case, for Nisan is numbered Month No. 1.

The reason for the shift from Nisan to Tishri is the gradual development of Judaism from a faith which dwelt exclusively upon physical nature to an outlook on life which pondered the miracle of human nature. This evolution is visible in the manner in which the Jewish holidays were slowly elevated in their significance. Whereas their agricultural associations remained, gradually the Jewish leaders attached new reasons for each of the festivals. Beginning with Passover, the weeklong feast which was originally associated with the arrival of spring, the rabbis invested its observance with a new meaning. It became the commemoration of the insurrection against slavery led by Moses. So Passover acquired a new aim; it was the birthday of freedom, for the revolt by Moses marked the first time in history that human bondage was condemned as a contravention of God's gift of liberty for all.

Thus it was with the New Year. It was deliberately shifted from springtime to another period to dramatize the fact that the new year ought to be an occasion not only for rejoicing over what happens in the soil but also for what can happen in the soul. This shiftover pointed up the religious lesson that what really matters is not so much the material as the moral.

It should be pointed out that Jews do not live by their religious calendar except in the matter of observing the holidays. For all other purposes Jews live their lives by the civil calendar. This is also true in the State of Israel, where the months from January to December are utilized by the government and the people for all their regular transactions. But the religious calendar, that blend of the moon's circuit and the earth's movements, is utilized for those occasions when the people feel prompted to bless and thank Almighty God.

NOTICES AND COMMENT

RABBI SILVER BECOMES ADVISOR, Rabbi Samuel M. Silver—whose delightful and clear explanations of Jewish faith and practices have been appearing in this publication—has generously consented to serve as an Advisor from the Eastern Zone. Rabbi Silver is spiritual guide of Temple Sinai in Stamford, Connecticut. A native of Delaware, he is a former president of the Jewish Chaplains Association of America. His latest book *Explaining Judaism To Jews & Christians* can be purchased, at two dollars per copy, by writing to 53 Nutmeg Lane, Stamford, Conn. 06905.

KARL W. FREY DIES. In 1958 Karl W. Frey, of Lima, Ohio, became acquainted with the Fellowship through the late Harry Halsey Starrett. And ever since, Mr. Frey, who was a florist, has served the Fellowship as an active Advisor and friend. It is with deepest sorrow that we record his death last August 15 and extend our sympathies to his son who survives him.

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"HE COMETH AS A FLOWER AND IS CUT DOWN"

Gail White

Ah, had I had my own creation,
What should I not have been!
Light and free as a lark can be,
And sweet as a tamarind.
Clear and fair as the mountain air,
And soft as the evening wind.

Ah, had I had my own creation,
What should I not have been!
Set my name on the lists of fame
And shone as the rising sun.
Made my mark like the moon in dark
That looks upon all as one.

Man is denied his own creation,
Low is his lot withal.
Yet we trust it is more than dust
That waits at the end of all.
For He who died at the Eastertide
Was born in the oxen's stall.